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## A Message from the Board of Education on the Passing of Mrs. Patricia O'Neill

September 14, 2021

Dear MCPS Community,

The Montgomery County Board of Education regrets to announce that Mrs. Patricia O'Neill, Board of Education member, passed away today, September 14, 2021. Mrs. O'Neill served on the Board for more than twenty years and the loss of her wisdom, passion and commitment will be felt in the Montgomery County community for a long time. We are deeply saddened by Mrs. O'Neill's passing and offer our deepest condolences to the O'Neill family.

"Pat had years of institutional knowledge and a deep commitment to Montgomery County Public Schools," said Board of Education President Brenda Wolff. "We have lost an impassioned advocate for children, students and our community. Mrs. O'Neill leaves a legacy of educational excellence that will guide our work for years to come."

"Pat O'Neill was a fierce champion for staff, students and families and the impact of her work will live on for generations," said interim superintendent Dr. Monifa McKnight. "I am grateful for her service, her leadership, and her guidance and will miss her wisdom and partnership."

Mrs. O'Neill was first elected to the Board of Education in 1998 and is the longest serving Board member in the history of Montgomery County Public Schools. Mrs. O'Neill was currently serving her sixth four-year term on the Board. She had served as president five times and vice president six times. Mrs. O'Neill was most recently serving as chairperson of the Board of Education's Policy Management Committee and was a member of the Fiscal Management Committee.

Mrs. O'Neill was past president of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) and past co-chair of the Washington Area Boards of Education. She served on numerous advisory committees for education-related issues, including the Maryland Blue Ribbon Panel on Teen Pregnancy and the Maryland Comparable HSA Task Force. In 2006, she was named by then-Governor Robert Ehrlich to represent MABE on the Task Force on School Safety. Prior to joining the Board, Mrs. O'Neill was a longtime PTA activist in the Walt Whitman cluster and served in various volunteer and leadership roles. She served as the vice chair for the Montgomery County Public Schools Educational Foundation and was a member of the Foundation's grants committee.

In 2015, Mrs. O'Neill was named one of the 100 Most Powerful Women by Washingtonian magazine. Mrs. O'Neill was a graduate of Walter Johnson High School and held a degree in Social Science from Southern Methodist University. Survivors include her husband, Rick, and two daughters, Jenny and Melissa, who are graduates of MCPS, as well as two grandchildren and her sister. Services have not been planned at this time, but information will be shared

in the coming days.

Montgomery County Board of Education

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**For more information contact the Department of Public Information and Web Services**

**Phone: 301-279-3853 | e-mail: [pio@mcpsmd.org](mailto:pio@mcpsmd.org)**

Department of Public Information and Web Services  
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 112, Rockville, MD 20850

Phone: 240-740-2837 | Fax: 301-279-3221

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